

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

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INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
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AMEMBASSY MANILA
AMEMBASSY SEOUL
AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 18431

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: ELAB, JA, KS
SUBJECT: DOMEI CHAIRMAN AMAIKE EXPRESSES CONCERN OVER FUTURE US
POLICY TOWARDS KOREA

1. DURING LUNCHEON MEETING WITH AMBASSADOR TUESDAY, DEC. 14, DOMEI LABOR FEDERATION CHAIRMAN AMAIKE EXPRESSED CONSIDERABLE CONCERN OVER RUMORS CIRCULATING HERE THAT CARTER ADMINISTRATION CONSIDERING WITHDRAWAL OF US MILITARY PRESENCE IN KOREA AND PLANNING TO INITIATE SHORTLY DISCUSSIONS ON THIS SUBJECT WITH GOJ. AMAIKE SAID HIS CONCERN STEMS FROM SERIES OF RECENT CONVERSATIONS WITH SOUTHEAST ASIAN LABOR LEADERS, SUCH AS SINGAPORE'S DEVAN NAIR, WHO ARGUE THAT ANY SUDDEN DECREASE IN US PRESENCE IN KOREA WILL CREATE SHIFT IN ASIAN BALANCE OF POWER WITH SERIOUS DESTABILIZING EFFECT ON SOUTHEAST ASIA.

2. AMBASSADOR SAID THAT PRESIDENT-ELECT CARTER AND HIS ADVISERS HAD NOT ADVOCATED WITHDRAWAL OF AMERICAN FORCES FROM KOREA DURING RECENT CAMPAIGN BUT HAD DISCUSSED POSSIBILITY OF REAPPRAISAL OF US POLICY AND HAD INDICATED THAT ANY SUCH REAPPRAISAL WOULD INCLUDE CONSULTATIONS WITH JAPAN.

3. COMMENT: TWO ASPECTS OF AMAIKE'S COMMENTS SEEM
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PARTICULARLY WORTHY OF NOTE. FIRST OF ALL, LEADERS OF MODERATE ICFTU-AFFILIATED DOMEI RARELY, IF EVER, SPEAK

OUT ON INTERNATIONAL ISSUES. THEREFORE, FACT THAT
AMAIKE DELIBERATELY RAISED KOREAN ISSUE WITH US IS
FURTHER INDICATION OF WIDESPREAD, IF POSSIBLY
EXAGGERATED, JAPANESE UNEASINESS OVER CARTER ADMINI-
STRATION'S INTENTIONS VIS-A-VIS KOREA. (WE ASSUME
AMAIKE, AS SENIOR ADVISER TO DEMOCRATIC SOCIALIST
PARTY, IS ALSO REFLECTING ITS VIEWS.) SECONDLY,
AMAIKE'S LINKING OF US PRESENCE IN KOREA TO SOUTHEAST
ASIA'S POLITICAL STABILITY IS UNUSUAL SINCE TENDENCY
HERE UP TO NOW HAS BEEN TO FOCUS ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY ON
DIRECT EFFECT ON JAPAN OF ANY CHANGE ON KOREAN PENINSULA.
IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT AMAIKE VIEWS EXPANSION OF COMMUNIST
POWER IN ASIA AS PRINCIPAL EXTERNAL THREAT TO JAPANESE
DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS.
HODGSON

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